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THE COUNTY OFFICIAL PAPER

BE FAIR

How many people are there in Columbia County who favor throwing away \$55,000 of the County funds, raised by taxation of the property in the County, and paid by many people who were not and are not in a position to pay it? How many tax payers are there in Columbia County who would deliberately spend \$55,000 of the tax payer's money on a road that could not possibly be used six months out of the year, and the other six months only at a great inconvenience and cost? How many people are there in Columbia County, who travel the roads of the county, would travel a road thrown together without any finish upon it, which would have ruts, chuck holes, and other obstructions the year round with mud hub deep in the winter time, when they could travel on another road parallel with the mud road and only a few hundred feet distant, with macadam finish, good bridges and smooth surface?

That is the situation in Columbia County at the present time. The State Highway Engineer has surveyed a road down the west side of the track from Scappoose to Tide Creek. A greater portion of this road, if constructed, would have to be entirely new road. That portion of the road from the railroad crossing just south of Warren to the underground crossing at McBride Canyon between Columbia City and Deer Island is the road in controversy in this County at the present time and which has caused so much ill feeling among the people and been the innocent cause of many charges of dishonesty and malfeasance in office. It has been the cause of charges and countercharges of inefficiency, grafting, robbery, trickery, and every other rotten charge imaginable. Whether or not these charges are true remains to be seen, but for the purpose of showing the impracticability of building a new road where there is already one built, this article is addressed to the sound judgment and good sense of the people of Columbia County.

The plat shown on the first page of this issue of the Mist shows in detail the situation over which the recall is presumed to have been invoked against the County Court. This plat shows that the State Highway Engineer, Major Bowlby, after having been invited by the County Court of Columbia County, to survey and assist in building a road through Columbia County starting at the Multnomah County line and then following the old road as far as practicable so as to avoid dangerous curves and steep grades, through Scappoose, Warren, St. Helens, Deer Island, Goble, Rainier, Mayger, Clatskanie and Marshland to the Clatsop County line, surveyed a road from the Multnomah County line down through the County to the Clatsop County line. But in this survey he entirely ignored the wishes of the people in certain portions of the county and proceeded to survey a road that would accommodate the Portland people, according to his judgment, instead of the people of Columbia County. He allowed himself to be governed entirely by out side influences in surveying and locating some of the road through this County. He overlooked the fact that there was an old road for him to follow which could be utilized at small cost in certain portions of the County, so that the greater portion of the money, caused by a huge debt which the people of this County have burdened themselves with for the purpose of getting a road throughout the County, could be used on the lower road where there was urgent need for it. He undertook to dictate to the people of this County just what they should do and where they should spend their money so that the Portland automobile owners, of which he says there are more than 6000 vitally interested in the building of a road through Columbia County, so they can speed from Portland to the sea in 5 hours. He forgot the fact that there are people in Columbia County who are also interested in the building of a road that can be used by them as well as the outsiders. He has acted in an arbitrary manner all the way through, but in order to carry his point to a certain extent he suggested to the County Court and recommended that the greater portion of the money to be spent for road building along the river, be used on that portion of the road from Tide Creek down to Clatsop County and that the tax money raised by the Court could be used in repairing the old road, taking out the dangerous curves and knocking off some of the bumps. Now he is insisting that even the

money which he recommended be used to repair the old road so that the new one could be built, be also used on that portion of the road from Tide Creek down and NO WORK AT ALL BE DONE IN THE SOUTHERN PORTION OF THE COUNTY. Call it what you will, this is the real object of the recall and the recall is the direct result of agitation and patting on the back by the Portland interests with Major Bowlby at the head.

The recall petitions themselves do not state anything. Each and every allegation contained therein are groundless and false, as is stated by the County Court in a signed statement in this paper. Then when the leaders of the movement are pressed for a reason for the recall they come back that the County Court has failed to live up to an agreement to turn over to the State Highway Engineer, Major Bowlby, all the money in the County so that he can use it wherever he sees fit and the people who are directly interested in the payment of this money and the location of the roads may stand back and watch their money go where it will do them no good, but will accommodate more than 6000 automobile owners of Portland. That is the reason assigned by the recallers, but it is not so stated in the recall petitions. It is a subterfuge in order to get all the money some place else than where it should be.

A question to the fair minded people of the County living between Tide Creek and Clatsop County. When there were \$200,000 bonds voted to build a road from Multnomah County to Clatsop County, with something like \$100,000 more to be raised by taxes that could be applied on the main road and some side roads leading into it, and for the purpose of building and repairing the necessary bridges, and that portion of the County where you live receives every cent of the bond money, \$200,000, and at least one half of the tax money, do you consider it selfish or extravagant if that portion of the County from Tide Creek to Multnomah County gets the small share of \$55,000 with which to repair its old road? Do you think that is an unfair division of the money? Do you think that the people of the Southern portion of the County have been fair with you and that they have been magnanimous and patriotic enough to look to the best interests of the whole County? If you do think so then you should vote against the recall movement. If you think that we are not entitled to any of the money at all, when we are paying more than 42 per cent of entire taxes of the County, and that we should be compelled to use our old roads without even repairing them so that your roads can have the benefit of all the money, then vote for the recall.

Then look at it the other way. Suppose the County Court should turn over to Major Bowlby that \$55,000 with which to build the new road from Columbia City to Warren, which is what the recallers are demanding, ostensibly for the purpose of building this road, and he should go ahead and try to do something with it on that amount of money? How far do you suppose he would get with it? Do you suppose he could secure the right of way for the road for that money? Do you suppose he could build more than 7 miles of road, secure the rights of way through valuable orchards, barns, residences and other buildings, build two bridges and put that road in shape that it could be used even by a lone horse without a rider? Would you require the people of this end of the County to throw away what little money has been reserved for them, on a road of this kind? Would you consider that a man, be he Highway Engineer or County Judge or County Commissioner, who would in this manner throw away the money of the taxpayers, a safe man to trust with the affairs of the County? Answer these questions in a fair way, fair to yourself and fair to your neighbor and your neighbor's neighbor and then say what is the real object of the recall. Answer these questions, look into the road affairs of the County as they really are and then decide whether or not there are robbers, grafters, thieves and liars handling our business or whether they are men who have the interests of the whole County at heart and are doing the very best they can for the entire people.

THE CLATSKANIE MEETING

This recall election and the causes leading up to it are the important and sole topics of conversation among the people of the County at this time. The statement and charges being made by various people against the present officers are so inconsistent that it seems very appropriate at this time to give some of the facts that are indisputable. The Clatskanie Chief has said that the violation of a promise made by the County Court at the Clatskanie meeting, was the important issue of this election and that had the County Court lived up to its agreement there would be no recall etc. For the edification of the readers and to call attention of the Chief and the people of that section of the County just what

was said in the Chief we give some of that article, as follows;

"The Clatskanie meeting, which in the light of subsequent events assumes an importance beyond what was thought at the time, was attended by over 500 citizens of Columbia County, every section of the County being represented. Judge Harris stated at that meeting in so many words that the sum of \$315,000 would be placed by the Court at the disposal of the State Commission for construction work on the Columbia Highway, and that the Commission was to be unhampered in its control of this sum, which was \$55,000 less than the Court had agreed in its published budget to devote to this highway. However, at the time of the meeting the people accepted as perfectly proper and consistent with good faith, the statement of Judge Harris that upon reflection the Court found they could not spare this amount to the highway, but for the Mist or the Court to deny that such a promise was ever given, is preposterous, since there were too many present to admit of such a position being taken."

Since the Chief, along with many other persons have made the statement that the violation of the pledge made at this meeting by the Court, is the paramount reason for demanding the recall of the officers, let us cite to the Chief and those other people who are making those statements some things which happened there and which of themselves prove what was actually done at the meeting and what the complete understanding was. If the Chief or the people who are claiming this as the real cause for the recall or the recallers themselves are willing to base their fight upon the County Court on the violation of a pledge made at that meeting, we are ready to take them at their word and will take it for granted that they are fair enough to accept their own statement and to abide by the real facts of that meeting as they occurred.

The Clatskanie meeting was held at Clatskanie on the 9th of June, as appears from a dodger now in our possession and which reads as follows; "Good roads meeting. The Columbia County Good Roads Association will meet at Clatskanie, Tuesday evening, June 9th Governor West and Major Bowlby are expected to be present besides prominent men from different parts of the County. The Rainier Citizens will come on a special train. The meeting is of vital importance to every tax payer. If the State Highway Commission refuses to oversee the roads it will mean a loss of about \$84,000 to the tax payers. When the bonds were voted the Highway Commission was placed in charge of the work. Come one, come all and discuss these important matters"

That meeting was called by the citizens of the lower portion of the County in response to a statement that the Court was refusing to accept the survey of Major Bowlby on the west side of the track from Warren to Columbia City, and Major Bowlby had threatened to withdraw from the County if the Court did not accept his survey. So the meeting was held and the County Court was there. Assistant State Engineer Griswold was there, but Major Bowlby and Governor West were conspicuous for their absence. Now what happened at that meeting perhaps could best be told from a letter written by Mr. R. B. Magruder, one of the big taxpayers of the Clatskanie community and one of the men who has been most interested in the good roads movement in Columbia County. Mr. Magruder was at the Clatskanie meeting and in explaining it in a letter to Major Bowlby some time later he says;

Clatskanie, Ore., July 21, 1914

Major Henry L. Bowlby,

300 Court House, Portland, Oregon.

Dear Sir;

It is quite evident that you were misinformed regarding the County Courts intentions in the road matter Saturday, and were justifiable in your belief that it was based on a groundless report.

It seems that the County Court had asked for bids on the piece of road on which it was agreed that the upper end of the County should have and pay for out of its portion of the regular fund. This does not effect the \$260,000 bond money which was to apply on the Columbia Highway. As this proposed road leaves the Highway and shunts around through St. Helens, there will be a few miles of Highway not opened until more funds are available, but as the proposed shunt will be according to State Highway specifications and only one and one-half miles longer, and seems to meet the approval of the upper end of the County and the upper end of the County has this \$55,000 to spend, while the lower end of the County might question the judgment in applying it to this road, yet they have a right to do so and at the mass meeting in Clatskanie it was so arranged. We all feel sure that it is the intention of the Court to secure the right of way over the entire Columbia Highway as located, to provide funds for opening up this piece through Houlton as soon as the funds are available.

I am sorry this rumor got started, and wish that there was a more perfect understanding, and familiarity of plans between the Columbia County Court and the Columbia Highway.

Yours respectfully

R. B. Magruder

Thus it will be noticed that Mr. Magruder understood that the agreement was that there would be \$55,000 to be used on this road from McBride Canyon to Warren. In face of this letter will the Clatskanie Chief still say that the Court has violated its agreement when it is doing only what Mr. Magruder says was the agreement, and no more?

If that is not sufficient proof we would like to have the Chief go back over its files and look over the report of that meeting as published by it. We have no means of knowing what that report was but would just like to have the Chief tell us what it said about the agreement at that meeting. Also it might look up the report of the meeting as given by the Rainier Review. We have no means of knowing what that report was but are willing to take it that the report was in accordance with the facts as set forth by Mr. Magruder. Then on the 7th day of June, 1914, Mr. Griswold, the Assistant State Highway Engineer, who was the representative of Major Bowlby and Governor West at the Clatskanie meeting, in an interview with the editor of the Mist and Mr. L. R. Rutherford in the office of the County Clerk at St. Helens made the following statement;

"The work from Tide Creek to Multnomah County line will be pushed forward as rapidly as possible; that portion of the old road on the west side of the track from Tide Creek to McBride Canyon to be graded and finished and the old road from McBride Canyon to Columbia City improved. From Columbia City of St. Helens a new road will be graded on the river side of the track and from St. Helens to Warren the old road will be straightened out. You might also say that the State Commission has decided to do some paving starting from Johnson Crossing and working this way as far as the funds will permit."

It will therefore be seen that Mr. Griswold understood what was to be done on this road and he attended the Clatskanie meeting and was a party to the agreement.

Mr. A. L. Clark, the man who is now trying to become a candidate for County Judge at the recall election, was also present at that famous meeting. After the agreement had been reached Mr. Clark made a speech in which he said that the arrangement to use \$55,000 of the tax money on the Columbia City-Warren road was perfectly satisfactory so long as none of the bond money was used.

So the statement made by the Mist two weeks ago that there was a misunderstanding about this recall, which statement was so quickly taken up by the Chief, was probably correct after all. From the statement of the Chief two weeks ago as compared with the letter from Mr. Magruder and the statements made by Mr. Griswold and Mr. Clark, it is still more evident that there was a misunderstanding.

In the light of events, of the proof of the understanding at the Clatskanie meeting and the facts that the Court is doing exactly what was agreed upon at that meeting, the fact that the Chief says the agreement at that meeting is the paramount issue of the recall election, we shall expect to see the Chief and a whole lot more of the people down there, now get behind the Court and put to rout the men who are demanding a recall on false and frivolous misrepresentations.

The war in Europe has cost perhaps millions of lives and the destruction of property that cannot be estimated. Murmurs of peace settlements are in the air and it is to be hoped that these murmurs will result in a permanent peace.

A continuation of the war will only result in more lives sacrificed and more property destroyed and the final result will be the same.

On a smaller scale but nearer home, the Columbia County war is drawing to a close, but a peaceful settlement before any more damage is done will have a beneficial result, while if the uncalled for troubles are continued it will result in no good to any person or any locality and the effects will be felt for some time. Let us have peace.

This is an opportune time for the United States to set a worthy example to the rest of the world by attending strictly to its own knitting.

Marriage is like a piece of machinery which requires two people to run it.

If pork continues its upward climb the only thing left us will be the grunt.

Some crowned heads are as empty as a barrel with the bung knocked out.